CLAIMS

Having thus described the invention, what is claimed is:

1. A method for testing a fecal sample, the method comprising:

obtaining a fecal sample from a person; and

determining whether anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic antibodies are present in the sample.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein if the sample contains anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic antibodies, a diagnosis of ulcerative colitis may be substantially concluded.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein the presence of anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic antibodies is used to aid in the differentiation of ulcerative colitis from Crohn's disease.

4. The method of claim 2, wherein the presence of anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic antibodies is used to aid in the differentiation of ulcerative colitis from other gastrointestinal illnesses.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein the other gastrointestinal illness is irritable bowel syndrome.

6. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the endogenous anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic antibodies comprise the total anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic antibodies.

7. The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising:

diluting the fecal sample.

8. The method as recited in claim 7, further comprising:

contacting the sample with neutrophil cytoplasmic antigens to create a treated sample.

9. The method as recited in claim 8, further comprising:

contacting the treated sample with polyvalent antibodies to human immunoglobulin to create a readable sample.

10. The method as recited in claim 9, further comprising:

determining an optical density of the readable sample at 450 nm, wherein the optical density corresponds to a level of endogenous anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic antibodies in the sample.

11. A diagnostic assay for diagnosing ulcerative colitis by determining the endogenous anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic antibodies, the assay comprising:

obtaining a human fecal sample;

diluting the fecal sample;

contacting the sample with neutrophil cytoplasmic antigens to create a treated sample;

contacting the treated sample with polyvalent antibodies to human immunoglobulin to create a readable sample;

determining the optical density of the readable sample at 450 nm.

12. The diagnostic assay as recited in claim 11, wherein if the readable sample contains endogenous anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic antibodies, a diagnosis of ulcerative colitis is substantially concluded.

13. The diagnostic assay as recited in claim 12, wherein the antibodies are one of IgG, IgE, IgM, IgD, IgA_{sec}, IgA, and combinations thereof.

14. The diagnostic assay as recited in claim 1, wherein the assay comprises one of an enzyme-linked immunoassay and a lateral flow membrane test.

15. A kit for diagnosing ulcerative colitis by testing a fecal sample from a person to be diagnosed, the kit comprising:

one or more microassay plates, each the plate containing neutrophil cytoplasmic antigens;

polyvalent antibodies to human immunoglobulin; and

enzyme substrate for color development.

16. The kit as recited in claim 15, further comprising a stop solution for quenching the reaction.

17. A method for screening for ulcerative colitis, the method comprising:

obtaining a sample from a person;

determining whether anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic antibodies are present in the sample; and

if so, a diagnosis of ulcerative colitis may be substantially concluded.

18. The method of claim 17, wherein the presence of anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic antibodies is used to aid in the differentiation of ulcerative colitis from Crohn's disease.

19. The method of claim 17, wherein the presence of anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic antibodies is used to aid in the differentiation of ulcerative colitis from other gastrointestinal illnesses.

20. The method as recited in claim 17, wherein the endogenous anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic antibodies comprise the total anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic antibodies.

21. The method as recited in claim 17, further comprising:

diluting the sample.

22. The method as recited in claim 21, further comprising:

contacting the sample with neutrophil cytoplasmic antigens to create a treated sample.

23. The method as recited in claim 22, further comprising:

contacting the treated sample with polyvalent antibodies to human immunoglobulin to create a readable sample.

24. The method as recited in claim 23, further comprising: determining an optical density of the readable sample at 450 nm, wherein the optical density corresponds to a level of endogenous anti-neutrophil cytoplasmic antibodies in the sample.

25. The method as recited in claim 17, wherein the sample is one of human feces, whole blood, serum, plasma, human bodily fluid and human tissue.